

Essay  
Ready at  
Semi-Centennial Union  
of  
Alumni of  
Molloyan Fresh College

Freiday, June 1888

To  
Mr. Catharine E. Benson  
rec. Boston.  
of Mass. Co.

1 11  
My first appearance in public as a  
reader, when a young & merry school girl  
was in obedience to the higher powers. After  
the lapse of  $\frac{1}{2}$  century, with the burden of  
years pressing heavily upon me I am again  
called before you as the last resort, at  
the very last moment. Custom would have  
me add an apology for short comings, but  
custom compels me to say, I would have  
succeeded no better had months been  
given me for preparation - As it is for only  
ten minutes, please pardon the Ego, should  
it become preeminent, be lenient in your  
criticisms & wait patiently for the pleasing  
contrast which will be presented by my  
more worthy successors - The 7<sup>th</sup> of Jan  
1839 was one of the most memorable days  
in the history of Macon - On that day the  
matriculation book was opened & 90  
girls from Macon & abroad were  
registered as pupils of Geo. Female  
College



College boys were no novelty for Athens,  
 Penfield, Oxford & Midway of our own  
 state & Randolph Macon of Virginia were  
 well represented in our midst. But,  
 College girls! - The idea that woman could  
 compete with strong minded man in the  
 pursuit of knowledge had never until  
 that late date taken possession of the  
 public mind - It was enough education  
 for a woman, if she could calculate  
 the cost of  $27\frac{3}{4}$  yds of cloth at  $33\frac{1}{3}$  cts per yd  
 or  $6\frac{1}{2}$  lbs of butter at  $18\frac{3}{4}$  cts per lb - How far  
 they were wrong in their opinions has been  
 fully demonstrated in the number of  
 cultured women who have left these halls.  
 While no one has attained celebrity as  
 advocate for woman's rights in Legislative  
 or Electoral halls, they have exercised the  
 grand prerogative of woman to rule  
 in her own province - home - & have  
 trained sons & daughters who have  
 gone forth to bless the world as

Statesmen, ministers of the Gospel, missionaries & Citizens of whom any people might be proud & old Wesleyan joyfully says "These are my jewels". The 4<sup>th</sup> was devoted to examination & classification of pupils - The highest class was Jun - half advanced & consisted of seventeen members - 10 of whom graduated.

Rev. Geo. F. Pierce was Pres - & had charge of the moral sciences - which office he held until July 1840 - At that time he resigned, feeling it his higher duty to continue preaching the Gospel - He was so long & so prominently before the people there useless for me to attempt a eulogy - Ever kind & gentle his memory is lovingly embalmed in the hearts of all who were under his guidance - His life, "Bright as a star when only one is shining in the sky" was translated to a higher, better sphere  
 Sep. 3<sup>rd</sup> 1884 - and his "Farewell,"



A word which makes us linger,  
Yt, Farewell "

still echoes in  
our hearts as sadly as when he  
uttered it in 1840 -

Rev. Wm. H. Ellison had charge  
of the mathematical dept - No one  
knew him but to love him - I'll now  
relate a little incident which will  
show how wisely & effectually he gov-  
erned - On a rainy afternoon the  
day members of the gym-class, finding  
it monotonous in the "study room"  
decided to adjourn to the room of one  
the boarders to study the lesson - (You  
all know how girls perform that duty  
when at least a dozen are present)  
Upon entering the room we saw the  
stems of 1/2 doz clay pipes in the warm  
ashes in the fire place - "What are these  
for?" we asked - "We are going to curl  
our front hair - true to romanian

nature, a desire for personal improve-  
 ment, we decided to have our's called  
 also. Time sped rapidly & ere we  
 were aware, the bell summoned  
 us to our recitation in 'Euclid'. We  
 marched into the school room recitation  
 room. feeling that to be seen was  
 to be admired - A few questions were  
 asked & correctly answered. Miss  
 Martha, please take Prop. XL VII -  
 a peep into the book revealed the  
 figure but alas! the demonstration  
 was wanting. The next young lady  
 will go to the board. "Mr. Ellison  
 please excuse me I am not prepared  
 on the lesson." "The next-" "I don't know  
 the lesson, Mr. Ellison." This was too  
 much for his patience - quietly  
 folding his book, he said with a  
 voice full of tenderness, "Young  
 ladies had you devoted the hour  
 to study instead of making work -



screws, you would have found it more profitable." What a crushing blow to our pretty curls! The lesson was salutary, lasting & ever after when we reached "Pons Asinorum, Conic sections in Logarithms we passed safely over, leaving our cork screws slumbering in their ashes until by a process of Evolution they have risen with the present classes as well developed tangs. In 1840 he assumed the Presidency of the College & continued until 1851. Last year he left the Academies of Earth & entered the University of the Universe with the All Wise as his Teacher. He now sees clearly problems seen but in outline here & says with confidence & pleasure unknown in this preparatory school.

Quod erat demonstrandum.

Rev. Thomas B. Plade, of precious  
 memory was our teacher in Natural  
 Sciences & Botany. When the call was  
 made for a Botanical walk, we  
 cheerfully responded & were never  
 happier than when seated around him  
 on the bank of the Ocmulgee, analyzing  
 the flowers we had gathered while  
 passing through the woods which is  
 now, "Beautiful "Rose Hill" - the  
 foot of "Central Avenue, being our favorite  
 resting place - As he led us through  
 nature up to Nature's God, we loved to  
 linger there & often felt how sweet  
 'twould be could we at last lie  
 there beside its low, soft murmur-  
 ings - Two of that happy number are  
 resting there - one in tender womanhood  
 Mrs. Griswold - one in more mature  
 years - Mrs. David Blount - He too  
 has crossed the Crystal River



to where the fields are ever green  
 & flowers bloom in perpetual  
 beauty -

Adolphus Maussane our teacher  
 in languages was a man of sterling  
 merit & few words - unless, the recita-  
 tion in French was unusually good  
 then, his gratification knew no  
 bound - It required my every effort to  
 master the plain English - & if ever  
 he said 'tres bon' at the close of  
 one of my exercises, I knew it was  
 merited - He returned to vine  
 clad France & died, where  
 Dans Le 'Espoir reposez vous -

The rules governing the pupils were very strict but all did not extend to the "day scholars" - for we were allowed to 'see the boys' once a week - One of our worthy Trustees was then on the market. (H. L. Jewett) - & he can tell you the evening allowed us, for on that particular one - his brother Geo - always knew where to find him - if he does not recognize the picture I will not betray him - all were required to dress very plainly - & yds of any material being sufficient for a full dress - After our graduation dresses were made, we were startled by the information that "Julia Heard's dress has come & it is so fine - has two flourishes on the skirt & is trimmed with lace & ribbon" - It was too late on our part to make changes, so we made a virtue of necessity & ~~wore~~ wore it quietly -



We saw, we admired the fine dress but felt no envy, for when that left us our beloved classmate would go with it to her happy home on the gulf - So I hear some of the present class exclaim, how could you dress so plainly! you would never catch me on the stage in so plain a dress - the answer is simply this, our mothers made our dresses & we knew they were just as they should be -

Our examinations were public & oral - & we were at the mercy of a strict Examining Committee - we had this advantage however - we did not see a half day reporters sitting with pencils ready to chronicle & publish to the world our failures - young ladies, be thankful that the lines

have fallen to you in more pleasant places - You ask "was it not embarrassing?" indeed it was - To be on the stage with such persons as Longstreet, Means, Pierce, Andrew & many others was no slight affair - Hon. C. J. McDonald - Gov. of Geo. - was also present & was the only acting Executive ever present until our honored Gov. of this day - I remember the class was being examined in Chemistry - subject Caloric - Judge Longstreet Pres. of Emory College asounded us by asking "is there any light without heat?" That was not a part of our program & we were plunged into such thick mental darkness, we did not know there was any kind of light, much



more light with or without heat -  
 He saw our dilemma & kindly  
 came to the rescue after which we  
 were prepared for any & all  
 questions propounded -

Honors were not given for a  
 number of years - Excelsior was  
 our motto & we asked no higher  
 honor than to see "Distinguished"  
 written on our monthly reports &  
 to feel that we were in the faith-  
 ful discharge of duty -

A few days before our graduation  
 one of the girls exclaimed "girls  
 what do you think! those Randolph  
 marm boys will be here & they will  
 just criticise us, till we will  
 be scared we won't know a word"  
 True enough on the morning of

July 17<sup>th</sup> - as we walked on to the stage, directly in front of us, sat (with all due respect to their present honorable positions) Dan Clopton, Rob. Lanier - 'Fop' Dowdell Harrison & Jim Fort. But their august presence did not in the least intimidate us - for if they were college boys - we were college girls, the first in the world & as good as any body =

young ladies of the present class the past 50 years with its burden of joys & sorrows has quickly passed as a dream that is told - The succeeding 50, to you seems an interminable length of time - As you go forth



remember, "Into each life some rain  
 must fall. keep in view, behind the  
 cloud, the sun still shining." -  
 Demands will be made upon you  
 that have not been made upon us  
 your training, if true to it, will amply  
 qualify you to meet those demands -  
 No wiser blessing could I make for  
 you than that you may be true to every  
 God appointed work. In conclusion,  
 should any one of you live to  
 participate in the Centennial anni-  
 versary your thoughts will naturally  
 revert to this happy occasion - then  
 Will you think of this friend  
 who welcomed it too, and forgot  
 her own griefs to be happy with yours?"

Dr. Haygood -

When you left your Alma-Mater you little thought your next 'Diploma' would be received from the hand of a woman - This is a progressive age & we know not what the future may develop - This is not a 'Testimonial of scholarship' but a memento of the past - After 48 years it returns to its home asking love & protection - To you as the Representative of the Trustees I commit it for safe keeping - Cherish it for the sake of the giver who trusts ere long to enter that higher Kingdom of Learning where the reunion of Teachers & Alumni will be Eternal -



When I handed Dr. H —  
the "diploma" I kissed  
it "good bye" & so many  
remarked it was one of  
the prettiest episodes they  
ever saw —

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